3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

438
177
462
512

have articles of purchase and sale are calculated in silver currency.

The daily work of the women is cooking, carrying water, cleaning the house and yard, etc. During the time of farmwork they help the men in cultivating the fields.

FOOD

262
[252]

The staple food is dura. It is cooked, baked into a bread (*kupa*), roasted, brewed and, when green, eaten raw. For different kinds of food vide page 102. Their diet is rather monotonous, dura being its constant chief component. The dura is pounded and ground. The mortar is either a log of wood hollowed out, or a flat excavation in the ground, lined out with clay. The mill-stones — a large and a small one, with the latter the grinding is done — are secured from districts west of the Shilluk country. — Fire is made by twirling a hard stick on a soft piece of wood.

[462]
[372]

Besides dura they eat sesame, durra, maize, beans, some onions, various grass seeds, the seeds of the lotus plant and of some kinds of nymphaeae. The fruit of several trees, as dabeib, nabag, etc. also serve as food; they even rob ant hills to procure the winter store of hoarded seeds. White ants, when in the winged state, are a delicacy to them. — Milk is used in the household in many ways: it is drunk fresh, sour, or boiled, or dura meals are prepared with it. They also make butter, by shaking or rolling the milk in a gourd. — As domestic animals are almost never slain, meat forms no part of the daily food, but is rather an exceptional delicacy, which is, however, sought for with eagerness; of game they hardly leave any piece uneaten, skin and bowels not excepted; they do not even despise dead animals. The blood of killed animals is kept and cooked, but they do not tap the blood from living cattle, as is the custom with the Bari and Masai. — Generally they prefer the meat of castrated animals.

[231]

[171]

264

Two chief meals are taken daily; one from nine to ten in the morning, and the second at sunset.

273

BREWING OF BEER

A large quantity of the dura the people reap is used in cooking merisa or beer. The grain is put into jars and water poured on it. Then it is left till the grain begins to sprout. Then it is spread in the sun to dry, and then pounded or ground; this wet meal is mixed with flour from the fresh grain and put a second time into jars which are filled with water. After stirring and mixing well, a little dry meal is sprinkled on it; the jars are covered with small mats and allowed to remain a day or two, until it begins to ferment, when a little more water and meal are added. When the whole mass is well fermented it is filtered through a grass funnel, and the following day is ready for use. It will keep about a week. Though this drink is slightly intoxicating, it does not seem to do great harm; it is very nourishing, and the natives regard it rather as a food than a beverage.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Kinds of white dura.

ɟɔ̀l is very long in ripening. *ábwàk* maize.
mɔ̀r has a longer ear than *ɟɔ̀l*. *rɔ̀wɔ̀* Durra (panic grass).
ámɔ̀ɲɔ̀ɲ "finger", has four ears, which stand upright like the fingers of the hand.

ɟɔ̀-ɟɔ̀ɲ, ɔ̀kɛ̀l, ɔ̀ɟɛ̀rɔ̀k, ɔ́ɲɔ̀r ɲɲɔ̀ ("kills the elephant"), *wɔ́ɲ, ɛ̀lɛ̀l, ɔ́lɛ̀k-mɔ̀rɔ̀k, ɔ́ɛ̀mɔ̀ɲ, ɔ́wɔ̀r, ɔ́kɲɲɔ̀ɔ̀k, ɔ́kɔ̀rɔ̀k, ɔ́lwɔ̀l.*

The stalks of many of the white durras are cocked like sugar cane.

Kinds of red dura.

The common name for red dura is: *lwɔ̀ɲ*.

ɟɔ̀lwɔ̀, wɔ́ɲɔ̀l-fɔ́-ɟɔ̀wɔ̀, wɔ́ɲɔ̀l-fɔ́-ɔ́lɔ̀rɔ̀, ɔ́ɲɔ̀ɔ́ ("the Nubian"?), *ɔ́wɲɔ̀-fɔ́rɛ̀-dwɔ̀r, ɔ́ɛ̀lɛ̀wɲ, ɔ́ɲɔ̀l, ɔ́ɲɔ̀ɲ, ɔ́wɔ̀ɔ̀k, ɔ́ɛ́ɲɲɔ̀rɛ̀, ɔ́bwɔ̀ɔ̀l, lwɔ̀ɛ̀* ("of the white man"), *ɔ́bwɔ̀ɲɲ, ɔ́wɔ̀ɲɔ̀, wɔ́ɔ́ɔ̀* ("lion's eye") *wɔ́ɔ́ɔ́ɲɔ̀* ("crow's eye") *wɔ́rɔ́ɔ́, ɔ́ɔ́kɲɲɔ̀, ɔ́ɲɔ́mɔ̀-lwɔ́ɔ̀k, ɔ́wɔ́ɔ̀, ɔ́ɛ́ɲɔ̀rɔ̀ɲ, ɲɲɔ̀rɔ̀ɲwɔ* ("sheep-tail"), *ɲɲɔ̀ɲɔ̀ɲɔ́* ("horse-tail"), *ɔ́ɲɲɔ, ɔ́ɔ́kɔ̀l.*

Agriculture Among The Shollas.[1]

By R. W. Tidrick, of Doleib Hill.

The Shollas have hardly begun their agricultural life. Scarcely one half century ago they were purely a pastoral people. Only within the last decades has his lordship, the Sholla man, begun to assume the burden of providing for his family. In those earlier days the task of tilling the small patch of ground planted annually in dura fell to the women. Her hoe was made from the shoulder blade of a giraffe or buffalo, or sometimes from the shin or rib bones of these animals.

Boys tended the large herds and flocks, young warriors danced, went on the chase and raid. The old men idled their time away in the village.

But they say the cattle plagues became more prevalent. The Turk and Arab came and took away not only slaves, but cattle, and so necessity forced the Sholla to a larger village of the ground.

The change came naturally first in the northern end of their territory, where they came earliest in contact with the murderers and plunderers from down the Nile.

One man when questioned as to the food of the people in his boyhood days said: "We used to eat grass like cattle". There was as much truth as sarcasm in this statement. For even yet when the crop fails, the Sholla women gather grass seed from the swamps and plains. They rob the nests of their winter's provision of seeds. A little sugar is obtained by bruising and boiling a certain reed, which grows in the swamp.

[1] i. e. Shilluks.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

24 The Shilluk has not yet learned to grow a very large variety of plants. His one main crop is dura, the kaffir corn of America.

[22] All planting except tobacco, which is planted in small plots on the river
[24] bank during the dry season and watered by sprinkling the ground from a water jar, is done in the beginning of the rainy season.

A small amount of Indian corn is grown, most of which is eaten when in hard roasting ear. With the dura they plant a few beans, pumpkins, squashes, sesame and occasionally peanuts. No fruits of any kind are grown, and as
[25] there are no wild fruits worthy the name, the Shilluk has never known fruit until he has recently seen it in our gardens or at the government stations.

The Shilluk plants his dura in the same field year after year, until his crop fails once or twice. Then he hunts for a piece of high dry ground, preferably in the timber, for his early dura, and a low plain growing a certain rank wild grass for his late variety. He clears off the timber and digs up the grass for his new field which he tills, till another failure comes; if by that time his former field is growing of grass, he will return to its tillage.

His methods of farming are extremely crude, but in some respects accomplish good results. He has neither plough nor spade and never uses the mattock except to dig up the grass and loosen from new ground.

He prepares his ground by raking up the old stalks into piles with a dalob palm limb and burning them.

As soon as the rainy season opens and sufficient rain has fallen to soften the ground, he puts his seed to soak over night, so it will sprout the quicker, and thus more likely escape being eaten by white ants. With a long shoulder pole
[27] which has one end shaped like the bowl of a spoon, he opens up the ground, and drops in the seeds. As he steps forward to make another hole, he presses down the earth over the seed with his feet. The hills are made promiscuously, but are usually some eighteen inches apart in all directions. He plants a large number of seeds in a hill, and later thins out and transplants where hills are missing.

Often he has to replant, for there are many enemies of the sprouting grain. Some years pests of rats devour it, even after it is several inches high. The golden-crested cranes also pull up much of the grain as it comes through the ground. And as before mentioned the white ant destroys the grain in the ground unless it sprouts quickly. But under normal conditions the grain comes up very soon after planting. And the warm rains and tropical sun cause the crop to shoot up like Johnnie's bean pole. Weeds come on quickly too, and so the Shilluk begins hoeing his fields at once. It is the only real cultivation he does.
[12] His hoe is either a thin circular or rectangular piece of iron with a short wooden handle.

12: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918)1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

rabbit, and said, «Where is he that I may kill him?». The rabbit who had been hiding, in the grass, and listening said, «Here I am». The hyena gave chase, and the rabbit ran away. They had a very exciting chase until they came to the house of the porcupine, and the rabbit ran into it. The hyena called to the labe heron, «Go get the chum». (The chum is an iron hoe used for digging. The name for it is the same as the verb for eating.) The heron flew away to the house of the hyena, and said to the women folk, «The hyena sent me to eat». They cooked food and set it before the heron, and after it had eaten it returned to the hyena saying, «I have eaten». Impatiently the hyena said, «It was not the food I meant a little while ago. It was the chum. Go get the chum.» The heron returned to the house of the hyena, and said, «I have returned. Bring food». He ate and returned to the hyena, saying, «I have eaten». The hyena in wrath said, «Sit down here. Remain here at the door lest the rabbit come out. I am going, but remain at the door itself.»

The hyena left, and the rabbit eyed the door (put his head out), and he said, «The hyena will dig». And the heron cursed the rabbit, and said, «Your ears have been drawn out long by the sun». And the rabbit laughed heartily, and said, «You cursed me, and cursed the hyena with a very bad curse». In turn the rabbit cursed the heron and said, «Your neck is so long it shakes like grass in the current». And the heron laughed, and the rabbit ran out. The hyena came and said, «This is what I meant, this is the chum, the thing to dig in the earth. Is the rabbit here?» «He is here». «He came to the door just now, and I talked to him». The hyena said, «Sit down over there». And the hyena dug to the end of the hole, and the rabbit was not there. He said, «The rabbit is absent. Shall I not eat you?». He said, «Do not eat me then, but toss me up in the air, and I will turn into fat, and fall into your mouth». The hyena tossed it up, and held it upward with his eyes closed. The heron spit into the mouth of the hyena, and then flew away.

6. A boy named Ajok was not able to speak, although he could hear. A lion came to the village, and said, «I am looking for Ajok». He was told that Ajok could not speak, but he insisted, and said he would make Ajok speak. Ajok was brought, but he answered nothing to the greeting of the

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

463 824 [283] stalks of millet, binding them together with ropes which he makes of grass. The same grass provides him with the thatch for the roof, mats for his door, ropes of varying strength to tether his goats and cattle, and a rope of great thickness and strength to assist him in the dangerous sport of hunting the hippopotamus. From reeds gathered by the riverside he weaves grain baskets and fish traps. If a cow of 463 [232] his falls sick he can act as a veterinary doctor, and if he fails to effect a cure for the animal, he is quite competent at least to cure its hide! He makes his own pottery, beautifully [323] symmetrical and balanced, without the aid of a wheel, and fires it in an earth oven, and grows the calabashes which [415] provide him with drinking bowls. He can turn his hand to [294 237] shoemaking, fashioning a clumsy but serviceable sandal from hippopotamus hide and cow skin by using his spear blade very cleverly as both knife and awl. When his work is done he will fill his home-made pipe with tobacco he has grown and cured himself and gratefully drink the beer that his able wife has brewed for him. There are, naturally, some among them who are more gifted than others, or who show a special aptitude in some particular craft and therefore specialize in it. Thus, a Shilluk householder who wishes to have a superior type of thatching on his house will call in an expert to do it; yet such experts are comparatively few, because they are unnecessary in a community where each one is brought up to do everything for himself, and has no other work to prevent him from living a communal tribal life in full. The one craft that is completely exercised by a special few is that [326] of the blacksmith, and this because ironwork is so small a need in the life of the Shilluk. It is true that his two spears [411] and the small hoe he uses for cultivation are indispensable [412] to him, but once he acquires them they last a lifetime, and it would be a waste for him to collect the—to him—elaborate and expensive tools of the blacksmith's trade for which he would seldom, or never, have use. If ever he [437] needs a new spear or hoe he will, by buying or bartering, [439] obtain it from the local smith, or—as is more likely in these modern days—make his way to the nearest Arab

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

142
301
302
291
342
252
412
415

Photo: Fr. F. Spitzenberger

Girl pounding grain as a preliminary to grinding

[facing p. 84]